

## DIARY FOR THE WEEK *Starting on Monday 16th February 2026*

(All events held in St John's Church Hall unless stated otherwise)

<b>Mon</b>	<b>12noon</b>	<b>Funeral (T/L Thomas Palmer, S. Oxfordshire Crematorium)</b>
<b>Weds</b>	2pm	Badminton on Wednesdays
<b>Thurs</b>	8pm	St John's Badminton Group
<b>Fri</b>	2pm 7.30pm	Friends on Friday (HC) Online Lent Course (contact office or Alec Gill for link)
<b>Sat</b>	8.30am 2pm	Morning prayers at Frances Gillott's house Tea party at Cornerstone
<b>Sun</b>	2.30pm	Craft & Fellowship afternoon (details inside)

### BENEFICE MIDWEEK COMMUNION SERVICES

There will be a Holy Communion at St John's, Grove, on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April at 10am (Holy Week).

There will **not** be a Holy Communion at St Nicholas, Challow, on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> April

*NOTICES for inclusion in the newsletter must be sent to the editor by the preceding Tuesday midday at [news@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:news@valebenefice.org.uk), not to the benefice office. Thank you. It will help both the office and the editor. Items for newsletter inclusion will be for 2 weeks. Please re-send your content if you wish for your notice to go into the newsletter again. If anyone has specific prayer requests, please email confidentially to [prayer@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:prayer@valebenefice.org.uk).*

### CONTACT DETAILS

**Vicar:** Rev Alec Gill: 07739563894 [vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:vicaralec@valebenefice.org.uk)

**Associate Vicar:** Rev Miriam Jones: 07474095190 [vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:vicarmiriam@valebenefice.org.uk)

**Licensed Lay Minister:** Sarah Shackleton: 07587776609 [SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:SarahLLM@valebenefice.org.uk)

**Benefice Office:** Grove Parish Church, Main Street, Grove, OX12 7L  
Open: Mon–Fri. 10–12 noon. 01235 771479. [office@valebenefice.org.uk](mailto:office@valebenefice.org.uk)

# VALE BENEFICE NEWSLETTER

## 15th February 2026

### Sunday next before Lent

*Readings selected from:*

Exodus 24.12-18; Psalm 2 or 99; 2 Peter 1.16-21; Matthew 17.1-9

As we approach Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent, our readings remind us of the mystery and awesomeness of God. We're right to pause before we approach the holiest days of the Christian year. The Transfiguration looks ahead to the crucial three days when Jesus, "the Son of Man", is crucified and raised from the dead.

### Our Shared Worship

#### **15th February – Sunday next before Lent**

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Alec Gill

9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney - Rev Velma Oxley

10am Parish Communion, St James', Denchworth - Rev Miriam Jones

10.15am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Alec Gill

11am Parish Eucharist, St Nicholas', East Challow - Rev Miriam Jones

### Forthcoming Services

#### **18th February – Ash Wednesday**

7.30pm – Holy Communion, St Nicholas' Church, East Challow – Rev Miriam Jones

#### **22nd February - First Sunday of Lent**

8am Holy Communion, St John's, Grove - Rev Miriam Jones

9.30am Parish Eucharist, St James', Hanney - Rev Geoff Maughan

10am Parish Communion, St James', Denchworth - Rev Miriam Jones

10.15am Morning Worship, St John's, Grove - Sarah Shackleton (LLM)

11am Parish Eucharist (with Baptism), St Nicholas', East Challow - Rev Miriam Jones

## BENEFICE NEWS

For details of Benefice Lent courses please see separate sheet

**ST JOHN'S is looking for a new CHURCHWARDEN** to be appointed at the APCM on 16th May

The role of the churchwarden is to be:

- The Bishop's Officer
- A support for the Vicar and Associate Vicar
- Foremost in representing the Laity
- Responsible for services and buildings
- A 'caretaker' during Vacancy

Please pray that someone will step forward for this important role - is God calling you? For more information, please speak to Alec, Miriam, Nick or Colin

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2.30pm Grove Methodist Church**  
Come and join with prayers written by women of Nigeria, followed by refreshments

**WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February 8.30am**

Stanford in the Vale village hall. Theme: 'God in the Garden: Gardening for the soul'. Places limited – leave a message on 07880 655102

**CORNERSTONE NEWS:** Email: [office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk](mailto:office@cornerstonegrove.org.uk) Tel: 772280  
Open from 9.30 to 4.00 on weekdays and 10.00 to 3.00 on Saturdays. Please do continue to support the coffee shop and browse for cards and books.  
There are a number of **Lent Study books** and personal devotionals on the shelf. The new Take Note selection includes some of this year's new titles with good discounts.

**SUNDAY 22nd FEBRUARY – Craft and Fellowship afternoon 2.30-4.30pm**

We plan to continue holding Craft & Fellowship afternoons on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month in the Church Hall. The next session is on the **22nd February** and we'll be doing a little crochet. Anyone over 18 is welcome to join us. It's helpful, for catering purposes, if you let Sue Powditch know if you'd like to come - either by email at [suepowditch@gmail.com](mailto:suepowditch@gmail.com) or text on 07833 503674. If anyone has any surplus double-knitting yarn or crochet hooks, they can donate to our event it would be much appreciated. Also, if anyone is happy to make cakes for our tea at these afternoons then please let me know

**CAN YOU HELP?** Little People have asked if anyone has some girl's clothes (aged 4 years) for a family who were recently flooded. Please contact office if you can help. Thank you

**ST JAMES' CHURCH, HANNEY** – Due to ongoing building work, all information regarding St James' church services is provisional. Services may be changed/cancelled at short notice. See local notices.

**FUNDRAISING EVENT** – Chris O'Neil will be running the London Marathon in April in aid of **Marie Curie** and prior to that is holding a 'Karaoke Classics music bingo' evening at The Bell, Grove on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 8.30pm. More details on poster in foyer or at : [www.tinyurl.com/chrislm26](http://www.tinyurl.com/chrislm26)

**GROVE CHURCH VOLUNTEER ROTAS:** Thank you all for being on the volunteer rotas and serving our Lord in our church this way. The rotas for March-end August will be emailed out to you this week. If you have sent me absent dates I have ensured you are not rostered on those dates. If something comes up and you cannot do a duty on the rota please try and swap with someone (and let me know). If you can't find a swap let me know and we'll sort something out. If you would like a hard copy, please let me know. Benefice Office

**ST NICHOLAS CHURCH - MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

If you would like to subscribe to receive our Church & Community Newsletter to your inbox, please email [nigel.langford@me.com](mailto:nigel.langford@me.com)

There is a good mix of articles to read and you are free to unsubscribe at any time.

**THELMA LOCKWOOD** -Thelma died on 1st February. Thelma and Colin were regular members at St John's for many years before moving to Bourton on the Water in 1995. Please remember Colin and the family in your prayers.

**PLEASE PRAY FOR...**

**Health and healing:** Mary L, Rev Dick French, Norah L, Rob S, Peter Ch, Pat B, Emmeline (Pat B's granddaughter), Susanne C, Wendy R, Katherine S, Laura C, Ursula G & Richard H

**Friends and families mourning:** Alan Tranter, Linda Alder, Linda Sandels, Thomas Palmer and Thelma Lockwood

**Those living in:** Lancaster Crescent, Adams Row, Vickers Way, Armstrong Avenue, Barbury Drive (Grove); Sarajac Avenue (East Challow); Aldworth Close, Herman Close (East Hanney)

**The people of Ukraine and Cuba**, deprived of power; and our new Archbishop, Sarah Mullally.

**LECTIONARY READINGS FOR MORNING PRAYER**

<b>Mon</b>	Psalms 44	Genesis 37.1-11	Galatians 1
<b>Tue</b>	Psalms 48,52	Genesis 37.12-end	Galatians 2.1-10
<b>Ash Wed</b>	Psalms 38	Daniel 9.3-6,17-19	1 Timothy 6.6-19
<b>Thu</b>	Psalms 77	Genesis 39	Galatians 2.11-end
<b>Fri</b>	Psalms 3,7	Genesis 40	Galatians 3.1-14
<b>Sat</b>	Psalms 71	Genesis 41.1-24	Galatians 3.15-22

## BENEFICE LENT GROUPS

### WEDNESDAY EVENING LENT COURSE

#### 7.30-9.00pm: 'A Christian Look at the Environment'

Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about caring for the natural world? How does this fit with our understanding of the Gospel? Martin and Margot Hodson will lead this course for five evenings during Lent (25<sup>th</sup> February to 25<sup>th</sup> March) at their home in Grove. Contact: [martinjhodson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:martinjhodson@yahoo.co.uk), tel: 07799 226759 (or contact the Benefice office)

### ONLINE LENT COURSE

Starting on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February until 27<sup>th</sup> March (inclusive) (7.30pm-8.30pm) with Rev Alec Gill and Anne Cheeseman. We will be studying Jesus' final week. No course books needed. The link to join online will be sent out next week to the Benefice distribution list. If you are not receiving newsletters please contact Alec for the link separately.

### THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY LENT GROUP

The Thursday Bible Study Group will meet weekly during Lent on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March in St John's Lower Room from 2-3.30pm. We will be using Paula Gooder's course: 'Lentwise (Spiritual essentials for real life)'. All welcome.

### CHALLOW LENT COURSE

There will be a Lent Course in Challow at the home of Claire and Nick Page starting on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February at 7.30pm. It will be based on the Diocesan material 'Come and See: Discovering Jesus through the Eucharist'.

For more information contact Nick, Claire or the Vicars